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regular attendance at any school of which the arrangements are not planned to accord with those of the church, so that the discipline of the classes interfered not with the attendance at service, and other such matters. Hence the extreme difficulty of combining the general education of ordinary circumstances with the fulfilment of a young chorister's duties. I am told that in old times, the students in all the schools connected with, or dependent upon, or related to, church establishments, were required, as are the under-graduates at Oxford and Cambridge, to attend daily service—the cathedral being to the school what the chapel is to each of the University colleges; and if this arrangement now prevailed, the discipline of the school and the duties of the choir would now be, as in old times they were, fully compatible with each other. Such a school is then the true place for a chorister's education, and his engagement in the choir to perform one of the most conspicuous, and thence most important parts, in the daily service, should give him a grade above the other scholars, and entitle him to their particular respect. He would issue from such a school, not with a book education merely, but with a social education acquired in his admixture with the scions of the best families of the district; a twofold education that would qualify him for any position to which his talent and his fortune might afterwards bring him.

Thus much for general erudition; let me turn now to the special or technical training of a young chorister. It is impossible to calculate the advantages that might accrue to a boy in this situation, from the intelligent, genial instruction of a teacher who was authoritatively placed as master over him, with the professional talent and knowledge to justify his appointment, with the artistic character to incite his pupil's ceaseless emulation, and with the daily opportunity of guiding the studies and watching the progress of the boys confided to his charge. The benefits to those elder worthies whose names I have quoted, and to the far greater number whose names I have not quoted, of a real musical training during their period of choristership, is to be meted by the musical prowess of these men that is recorded in history and monumented in their works. Our art stands now in a wondrously different condition from that in which it stood one or two hundred years ago. The vast increase of matter for study is fairly balanced by the daily growing facilities for studying it. The comparative cheapness of books, musical and literary; of all kinds of instruments; of public musical performances, at which every master's precept can have living practical illustration; these are among the incidents in music's changed condition which enormously multiply the student's facilities of former times; and if our singing boys could profit by these facilities through the tuition of a competent and interested master, what musicians might not England add to the honoured list of her elder worthies! The choir-master to deal with such materials—to model with tools such as great men's printed works, musical instruments for practice, and great artists' examples, the mental matter entrusted to his charge—should be a musician who loved to exercise his talent and his philanthropy, not a priest or anyone else without art qualifications, who wanted a sinecure.

Fourthly, there is to consider a class of musicians, a class that I think might be or might become

musicians, that is not engaged in our churches, cathedral or parochial, and that is scarcely under the control of the precentor or local minister. This is the congregation. Volumes have been written, and still more has been said, on the subject of congregational singing; and I by no means expect that this wordy subject can be concluded by what is now to be advanced. Let it stand for so much to the pile, however, which some day may be completed; and let me hope that it may aid, though never so faintly, towards the completion of the desired good together with the completion of the discussion.

Most fervently I feel that the attainable best of everything, and nothing but the attainable best, which is appropriated to the service of the church, should be brought to bear upon it. A dabbling architect should not be employed when an accomplished artist could be engaged to build the edifice whose solemn appearance is to predispose the people for their spiritual edification. A man who had not the gift of elocution should not be allowed to read the Lessons. One who had not the gift of oratory, with all those collateral qualities that enable a speaker to address the very hearts of his auditory, to appeal to their reason as strongly as to their feelings, and to impress them with every phrase he utters as with the communication of a vital spirit, should not be licensed to preach. Exactly upon the same grounds, that nothing but the attainable best of what is appropriate should be brought to bear upon the Service of the Church, I feel that persons who cannot sing should not be permitted to nullify the efforts of those who can, and offend the ears of all who are modestly silent; any more than a non-artist should be permitted to erect a building, or a man with a defective delivery should be permitted to read, or one who had not the power to convince should be permitted to preach in it. But, what is the art of choral singing? Is it so measurelessly difficult that its attainment is beyond the reach of the very great majority of earnest persons, and that the pains necessary for such attainment are not fully equalled by the pleasure it brings? Is it, then, impossible that measures might be taken which would render the members of a congregation capable of sustaining their musical part in the Service, in such a manner as would be worthy even of the high occasion?

SINCE our late article upon "Drawing-room Music" fresh matter for thought and speculation upon the subject has been gradually accumulating, more especially from advertisements which daily appear in the newspapers; and we feel now desirous of understanding whether the kind of evening gatherings we have pictured to ourselves in our former remarks can really find pleasure in the species of entertainment which these advertisements describe. We remember some time ago a "Professor" giving what he called a "Drawing-room Entertainment," in which he laid himself flat down upon the floor, supporting his head upon a pillow, and then proceeded to tumble his little boy about in all positions; occasionally sending him, by a sudden impetus, spinning in the air; the applause of the audience being proportioned to the dexterity with which he avoided pitching on the top of his head upon the stage. If the title of this pastime be at all appropriate, we may therefore conclude that, when a family is assembled in the evening, it

is a common amusement to recline upon the carpet and kick your son about the room. This exercise however, being somewhat violent, may perhaps have passed away; for in the present day—although “Drawing-room skates” are exceedingly popular—many much more quiet entertainments are, we perceive, provided; amongst which “Drawing-room fireworks,” in spite of the Insurance offices, are in much demand. Then we have comic vocal music written, as we presume, for the family circle, for we are told that Leslie’s “great” song, “The Four Jolly Smiths,” is the “popular drawing-room song of the day,” a fact of which, until the appearance of this advertisement, we were certainly unaware; and as a further proof of the importance of this composition, we are informed that it is “also arranged for brass band of 15 instruments, with duplicate first cornet part,” so that it will assuredly make some noise in the world. Our taste in music will no doubt be thought, by the admirers of these works, a trifle too classical; and we might hesitate if we were to speak on the subject solely from our own feelings; but we must say that whenever we have heard these comic effusions either in or out of a drawing-room they have scarcely provoked a single smile; and although their extreme innocence may perhaps to a certain extent compensate for their extreme stupidity, it may become a question whether, like the unmeaning prattle of common-place children, such nonsense is not rather tolerated than enjoyed. In our researches into this matter, we find also that strictly evangelical families are now accommodated with precisely the article they require. We think it was Albert Smith who defined the height of misery to be “spending a wet Sunday with a serious family at Clapham;” and he also declares that, when he has been doomed to this penance, he has constantly felt a desire to kick over the tray upon which the coffee was being handed round by the servant; or, by a carefully contrived accident, to upset something which might for a brief period divert the family from that serious propriety which appeared to possess the entire household. That some such feeling as this must have communicated itself to the heads of these families seems apparent from the publication of the “Ave Maria” Quadrilles, the “Visions of Paradise” Mazurka, and the “Child of Heaven” Valse; works which may, we should think, be safely used by all who do not object to a little serious dancing in the evening. Such compositions should be sold with a decently conducted gravity; and may be pressed upon customers on the same principle with which the proprietor of a toy-shop recommended a “Noah’s Ark” as an excellent plaything for Sunday, because it was “alluded to in the Scriptures.”

It may be said that such advertisements as we have mentioned appeal only to those who, if such compositions were not published, would never think of purchasing music at all. To this we reply that, for the sake of the art, if not for that of the proprietors of these works, it would be very much better if such taste were not appealed to. [The “fast” spirit of the present day is rapidly creeping into our drawing-rooms; and we have young ladies who derive no enjoyment from the purest vocal compositions of the great masters, as conversant with “Jolly” somebody’s “great” songs as if they were in the habit of nightly frequenting the Music-halls: and certainly the rapidly increasing coloured

music-titles, of a questionable character, which stare them out of countenance in their daily walks, afford ample proof that the supply fully equals, if it do not exceed, the demand. It is true that there is just now a great fashion to admire what is presumed to be “classical;” but where this admiration in public sinks into utter apathy in private, such hypocritical enthusiasm is worse than candid indifference. The sickly sentimental ballads called into being and tenderly fostered by the “Royalty” system, may suffice for those who have never been trained to feel the eloquence of music in its highest aspect, whilst to others who desire something “more lively” the “great” songs of the “jolly” singers we have spoken of may be thoroughly acceptable. But all who desire the healthy progress of art should enter a protest against a system so utterly debasing to the youthful mind of a nation, whose boast it is to spread a love for what is good and great amongst its people. Ballads really excellent of their kind may be not only tolerated but enjoyed, even by those who can admire better things; but the maudlin sentiment of many of these productions is positively insufferable. Again, there may be songs (and indeed we have heard many) where a genial and ready flow of wit runs pleasantly through the verses; but what gratification to any listener can there be in drawing through many of the so-called comic songs which are now pronounced an “immense success?” We will place on record the titles of three of these—“Making Apple Dumplings,” “The Man wot played the Cornet,” and “Borachio, with the Roley Poley Eye,”—and ask any dispassionate judge to read through the words and try if they will even raise a laugh. For ourselves, as we have already said, whenever they have been sung in our presence, the inanity of the words appeared to be only equalled by the melancholy “jollity” of the singer; and we have no hesitation in affirming that if such compositions were banished not only from our drawing-rooms, but from our Music-halls, the atmosphere of both would become benefited by the change; and vocalists and poets (if we may so pervert the words) might probably consult their own interest by turning their attention to better things.

#### MONDAY POPULAR CONCERTS.

THE appearance of Madame Schumann at these Concerts, on the 4th ult., was an event so interesting to all who can appreciate the highest class of pianoforte playing, that there can be little wonder at the number of artists assembled on the occasion, or at the excitement caused even amongst the constant frequenters of these entertainments, by the novel sensation of listening to an executant whose reading was not as familiar to them as that of the clergyman whom they “sat under” on the preceding day. In truth, there can be little doubt that fresh interest is created in an audience by allowing the works of the great composers to be interpreted by various artists. There is always a difference in the reading of two pianists of an equal amount of intellectual power; and judgment in music, as in all other arts, is strengthened by comparison. That Madame Schumann is foremost amongst the most intelligent living pianists has been long conceded by all whose opinion is worth recording. For many years she has held the highest rank in Germany; and that this position has not been derived from her alliance with the composer, Robert Schumann, is proved by the fact that, as Madlle. Clara Wieck, she was universally recognised as one of the greatest artists of her day. Perhaps no one of the pianoforte sonatas of Beethoven could have been so admirably calculated to display Madame Schumann’s varied powers of colouring on the instrument as the one she selected on the occasion of her first appearance this season. The Sonata in D minor, No. 2, Op. 29, is certainly one requiring the most finished executive powers; but it also demands an intellectual appreciation of its meaning, and a dramatic faculty too rarely allied with mere facility of execution. The alternation of *Adagio* and *Allegro* in the first movement, with the occasional snatches of *recitativo*, can be readily played precisely as Beethoven has written them; but the power of sympathizing with the composer so as to re-produce his varied phases of thought as he spoke and felt in the language he had